

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 SY-10

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R 292230 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2274

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJECT: THE AFTERMATH OF AMNESTY

REF: BA-3769

1. SUMMARY. A TOTAL OF AROUND 500 POLITICAL PRISONERS WERE RELEASED AND EXONERATED UNDER THE PARDON AND AMNESTY ISSUED BY THE CAMPORA GOVERNMENT. AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF COMMON CRIMINALS ALSO ESCAPED IN THE CONFUSION. TWO WERE KILLED AND 20 WOUNDED BY POLICE IN AN ASSAULT ON THE VILLA DEVOTO PRISON BY A MOB DEMANDING PRISONERS BE RELEASED. THE ERP ISSUED A STATEMENT CRITICIZING THE GOVERNMENT BUT SAYING IT WOULD NOT ATTACK IT NOR THE POLICE IF GUERRILLAS WERE NOT PRESECUTED. ERP WOULD CONTINUE ATTACKS ON US BUSINESSES AND OTHER TARGETS. ERP CRITICIZED BY PERONIST YOUTH FOR GIVING HANDOUTS TO POOR AND BEING COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO CONFUSED PRESS REPORTS, THE PRESIDENTIAL PARDON AND THE PASSAGE OF THE AMNESTY LAW BY CONGRESS HAS RESULTED IN THE EXONERATION OF SOME 400 OR MORE " POLITICAL PRISONERS". IN ADDITION, ANOTHER 76 PRISONERS OF ALL TYPES WERE RELEASED PREVIOUSLY AT THE TIME THE STATE OF SIEGE WAS LIFTED ON MAY 23. HOWEVER, THE DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE VILLA DEVOTO PRISON WHICH LEAD TO THE PARDON ENDED IN TRAGEDY WHEN TWO TEENAGERS WERE

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KILLED BY POLICE EARLY ON THE 26 TH AFTER THE RELEASE OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS. THE KILLINGS OCCURED DURING AN ASSAULT ON THE PRISON BY A MOB WHICH WAS IGNORANT OF THE RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS AND WHICH CONSEQUENTLY WAS DEMANDING THEIR FREEDOM. ANOTHER 20 PERSONS WERE WOUNDED IN THE ATTEMPTED TAKEOVER.

3. DEMONSTRATIONS WERE ALSO HELD AT PRISONS IN TUCUMAN, MENDOZA AND CORDOBA TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. IN ALL CASES, COMMON CRIMINALS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE CONFUSION AND RIOTING TO EFFECT ESCAPE (70 IN CORDOBA ALONE). ANOTHER GROUP OF COMMON CRIMINALS IN CORDOBA RIOTED AND AGREED TO STOP ONLY UPON PUBLICATION OF A STATEMENT PROTESTING THE RELEASE AND EX-ONERATION OF PRISONERS WHO HAD COMMITTED CRIMES FAR WORSE THAN THOSE FOR WHICH THEY CONTINUED TO BE HELD.

4. THE ATTITUDE OF THE ERP TOWARD THE CAMPORA GOVERNMENT WAS REVEALED IN A STATEMENT GIVEN TO THE PRESS IN WHICH THE GROUP' S " AUGUST 22 " FACTION CHARACTERIZED THE NEW LEADERS AS REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF THE BOURGEOISIE AND THE ARGENTINE CAPITALIST REGIME. NEVERTHELESS, IT WENT ON TO SAY, THE GROUP WOULD DIRECT OPERATIONS NOT AGAINST THE POPULARLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT BUT AGAINST THE EXISTING " REACTIONARY SYSTEM" - AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN BUSINESS FIRMS, THE " OPPRESSOR ARMY," INTERNATIONAL ZIONISM (" THE MAXIMUM EXPRESSION IN ARGENTINA OF EXTERMINATING CAPITALISM"), AND THE BOURGEOISE CHURCH HIERARCHY WHICH HAS REPRESSED THE THIRD- WORLD PRIESTS. THE ERP PROMISED NOT TO ATTACK THE POLICE SO LONG AS THE LATTER REMAINED NEUTRAL AND DID NOT PERSECUTE THE GUERILLAS, EITHER BY ITSELF OR IN ALLIANCE WITH THE MILITARY. (COMMENT: NOTHING HAS YET BEEN HEARD OF THE FATE OF ADMIRAL ALEMAN OR COL NASIF).

5. THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY HAS BEGUN DELIVERIES OF FOODSTUFFS TO POOR PEOPLE IN THE " VILLAS EMERGENCIAS", BUT SOMEWHAT PARADOXICALLY THE ERP APPEARS TO BE SUFFERING A POLITICAL SETBACK AS A RESULT. IN ONE NEIGHBORHOOD, THE FOODSTUFFS WERE FLATLY REJECTED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AT THE URGING OF THE LOCAL BRANCH OF THE PERONIST YOUTH WHO ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING THAT THE PERONIST GOVERNMENT COULD TAKE CARE OF THE NEEDS OF THE POEPLER, AND THAT " CHARITY AND HANDOUTS" FROM THE ERP NOT ONLY WERE UNNECESSARY BUT WERE " COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY" SINCE THEY RESULTED FROM ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE REVOLUTIONARY LINE CHOSEN BY THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEOPLE. IN OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS THE FOODSTUFFS WERE ACCEPTED, BUT THE DELIVERIES WERE ACCOMPANIED BY STRONG MANIFESTATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR PERONISM BY THE RECIPIENTS.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH EXCESSIVE AND UNFORTUNATE IN ITS PRACTICAL RESULT, THE CAMPORA PARDON AND AMNESTY QUITE THOROUGHLY " RINGS DOWN THE CURTAIN ON THE PAST" AND GIVES THE GOVERNMENT A CON-

SCIENCE- FREE HAND TO DEAL FIRMLY WITH ANY FUTURE MANIFESTATIONS
OF TERRORISM. IT MAY WELL NEED THIS POLITICAL ADVANTAGE IN
DEALING WITH THE ERP, GIVEN THE LATTER' S CLEAR STATEMENT OF ITS
INTENTIONS. IT ALSO APPEARS THAT A MAJOR ROLE MAY BE GIVEN TO
PERONIST YOUTH IN COMBATTING TERRORISM, AND THAT THE OUTLINES OF
THIS CONFRONTATION HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO APPEAR.
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